

Leaf Pulling by the Purple Martin.—The use of green leaves in the nest compartments during the incubation and nestling periods is an interesting habit of the Purple Martin (*Progne subis*), which has been observed repeatedly at the writer's colony located at Manorville, Long Island, New York. Since it has not been seen elsewhere in the area nor found mentioned in the literature, a description seems warranted.

The martin house involved was erected in the spring of 1953 and attracted a number of immature birds, which failed to breed. In 1954 as many as eleven birds were present but only one pair actually nested. The use of green leaves was first noted on June 20 when one of two birds which alighted together in the top of a large Swamp Maple broke off a piece of leaf and carried it into the nest.

In subsequent years the colony increased to eight or nine pairs and the leaf pulling habit became a regular occurrence. A favorite perch of the martins was an old pear tree about fifty feet from their house. Several top branches were dead and the rest were rather sparsely covered with small leaves about one inch long. This tree became the primary source of leaf supply and by mid-summer, the upper branches seemed shredded by a horde of caterpillars. The martins, in spite of vigorous tugging, were seldom able to remove a complete leaf but usually succeeded in obtaining the major part while the tattered remainder was left. It is estimated that several hundred leaves were removed from this tree alone each season. In addition, pieces of leaf were sometimes plucked from other trees in the area. These included Elm, Black Cherry, Scarlet Oak and Swamp Maple. The tough leaves of the oak gave the birds much trouble, for they frequently failed to remove even a small piece after great effort.

Leaf pulling was observed as early in the year as June 5, 1955 about the time egg laying began and as late as August 3, 1958, the day before the last brood left the nest. It seemed to be more frequent after the hatching of the young and was participated in by both sexes. Several times birds were seen removing dried leaves from the nest compartments, and by the end of the nesting season the ground below the house was littered with discarded leaves. It is not known if all were deliberately removed or if some were displaced accidentally as the adults left the nests.

The use of green leaves in the nests of several species of hawks, particularly the Broad-winged Hawk (*Buteo platypterus*), is well known. Their use by this species seems to be analogous.—GILBERT S. RAYNOR, *Manorville, Long Island, New York.*

Sprague's Pipit and Smith's Longspur in Ohio.—On November 15, 1958, the writer collected a Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*) at Oxford Airport in west-central Oxford Township, Butler County, Ohio. The airport is approximately 25 miles north-northwest of Cincinnati, Ohio, and 1.5 miles east of the Indiana-Ohio state line. The mean elevation of the airport is 1,038 feet, while the average altitude in southwestern Ohio is about 675 feet. The area includes some 300 acres of which approximately one-third is leased and farmed in various crops, while the other two-thirds is maintained as airport. In the center of this acreage there is a narrow, slightly depressed strip which is permanently swampy except where drained on the airport proper. The grass on the airfield is maintained at a length of 4 inches. The pipit, an adult female, was found in a sparse area where the grass was dead or burned out. This is the first Ohio specimen of the

Sprague's Pipit. The Fifth Edition of the A.O.U. Check-list (1957) defines the United States winter range of this bird as ". . . from southern Arizona, Texas, southern Louisiana, and northwestern Mississippi. . . . Casual in Michigan, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida." On November 27, 1958, three more Sprague's Pipits were heard and seen at the same place by G. Ronald Austing, Emerson Kemsies, Worth S. Randle, Richard E. Watkins, Paul W. Woodward, and Jean M. Wright. One of these was trapped and banded by this group. The trapped bird and the collected individual were found in similar vegetative situations.

Also present on November 15, 1958, was a flock of thirteen Smith's Longspurs (*Calcarius pictus*). Two (sex undeterminable) were collected by the writer and constitute the first fall records of the species in Ohio. The A.O.U. Check-list reports this species as occurring "casually to . . . eastern Ohio." It has been a regular migrant at the Oxford Airport every spring since 1949 (Kemsies and Austing, *Wilson Bull.*, 62: 37, 1950), but previous observation had revealed no fall records.

The three specimens have been placed in the University of Cincinnati Collection, where identification was confirmed by Emerson Kemsies, Curator of Ornithology.—JAY M. SHEPPARD, 51 Sherry Road, Wyoming, Ohio.

Occurrence of Pink Coloration in Adult Female Purple Finches.—During the past five years I have been operating a small banding station with "pull traps" on my lawn baited with mixed seed. I have become particularly interested in the Purple Finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*) and the difficulty in sexing these birds *in vivo*. Purple Finches can be easily divided into three groups, according to coloration: 1) Adult males, showing the deep wine red typical of this species; 2) Brown birds, representing females and immature males; 3) Birds predominantly brown, but showing definite pink, of varying extent and intensity, over head, neck, rump, and sometimes out over the breast. It was this third group that was to me particularly interesting.

During the five year period I have banded 352 birds, of which 43 have returned to my station for two or more years. Of these 43, 25 were unquestionable males. Of these 25, 18 were a deep wine red on first banding, and 7 were brown. Of these 7, trapped as brown birds between April and July of one year, all returned the following year in April or May with the typical deep wine red of adult males. None showed any plumage intermediate between the brown and the deep red coloration of the succeeding spring. One of these males, banded as brown on May 1, 1957, returned the autumn of same year, September 21, 1957, fully red, and again on May 7, 1958, without having had any partial pink plumage.

The remaining 18 birds I have classified as females. Of these eleven have returned showing the definite pinkish color in question. Four of these have been followed for two years, and none has turned into the deep red color typical of the male.

At the fall 1957 meeting of the North Eastern Bird Banding Association I mentioned my theory about pink coloration in the adult female Purple Finch, and met with considerable difference of opinion. I was unable to find any description in the literature of this coloration in the female. Therefore, in the spring of 1958, I collected two specimens of Purple Finch, which I believed to be female, both showing this pink coloration. They were sent to Mr. James C. Greenway,